

41 Short Stories

About Life in Mauritania,
Especially Life in Nouakchott

plus

107 Proverbs

Written in Hassaniya and
Translated into English

by K.ould Beye
and Dave PENNEY

1994

David Penney's Intermediate Level
Hassaniya Language Texts & Proverbs
done with Kaber ould Beye
finished July 21, 1994

The materials include the following:

- 41 texts about Mauritania recorded on cassettes in Hassaniya (each one is recorded twice)
- the same 41 texts typed out in Hassaniya using Arabic script
- a translation of the same 41 texts typed out in English
- a list of 107 Mauritanian proverbs typed out in English and Hassaniya (using Arabic script)
- a cassette recording of these same 107 proverbs in Hassaniya (each one said 3 times) and English (said once)

Recommended method of study:

Set the Hassaniya Arabic text before you along with its English translation and then listen to the cassette of that text. First, just try to follow the Arabic script as you listen. Then try to understand the meaning of the text by looking at the English as you listen to the text. Lastly, try to become familiar enough with the Hassaniyan text by listening to it as many times as you need to while following the text in Arabic script with your eyes until you can read it on your own.

Note: I am sorry the recording of the proverbs is not better. Fortunately, it is the English voice (mine) that is the worst, the Hassaniyan voice is not too bad. I think you will find the recording of the texts satisfactory.

I hope you enjoy these materials. I thank the Lord for being able to make them. I intend to review them myself this next year in the United States. Feel free to get back to me with comments or corrections. Feel free to copy these materials as desired.

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June 1994

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كولها لك واعطي للنيرب عجلتها

كط في الزمن آل فات كانت نيرب وذيب ساكنين في خلو في نكر غابه
وكانت نيرب عندها بكر والذيب عند او داش وكانت النيرب ألا هي
آل تمشي سارح بكرتها واو داش الذيب .
إلين عاداليوم ال لاه تولد فيه بكرت النيرب كآل لها الذيب اليوم لاه نمشي ان
سارح .

امشي الذيب سارح و ولدت البكر اكبط ودار الدم علي رجلين او داش
وامكل رجلين البكر وراح يركم وإغني وإكر او داشي اولد ...
كآلت ل النيرب هاذا اولد بكرت يان ولان امطيت لك .
اتلاو يدايگ وعكب اتوافق اعلنهم إكيس القاضي ، وكاسوه .
إلين ال جاووه اعطاهم ميعاد .
جاووه في الميعاد ال كآل الهم .
لحكوه إنازع .

كآل الذيب ((انت انتازع آمالك ؟))
جاوب القاضي لاه نولد
كآل الذيب ساك يتخمم : ((كطيت شفت اظكر يولد ؟))
كآل القاضي : ((كولها لك واعطي للنيرب عجلتها))

TELL YOURSELF TO GIVE THE RABBIT BACK HER CALF

There was a time in the past (when) there was a rabbit and a fox living in the forest area of the country. The rabbit had a cow and the fox had a bull. And the rabbit always went west (with) her cow and the fox's bull. The day the rabbit's cow would give birth, the fox said, "Today I will go west."

The fox went west and the cow gave birth. He took the blood (of the calf) and put (it) on the legs of the bull and washed the legs of the cow. He returned that afternoon dancing and singing, saying repeatedly "My bull has given birth."

The rabbit said, "This is the offspring of my cow and I refuse to leave her with you." They began to fight. Afterwards they agreed to go to the judge and so they went. When they came he gave them an appointment.

(When) they came for the appointment that he said (gave) to them, they found him moaning (as if in labor). The fox asked, "Why are you moaning?" The judge answered, "I am giving birth." The fox responded without thinking, "Have you ever seen a male give birth?" The judge said, "Say this (same thing) to yourself and give the rabbit (back) her calf."

Work done with Kaber ould Beye, January 11, 1994

الخيمة و ال العرس

العرس عندنا هون في موريتان مسل مهمه حت لان كل راجل اتفكرش
يتحتم اعليه يتخيم و يمشي إلود لعروس راضيت وال يگبظ منت عم و
إمشيلها خطبه إلين تكبل إج اشيوخ و يعقدوها و يعطيهم أصدقاء . وإفوت
اطبل أثلت اليال للعقد ويوم للمروح وثلت اليال لاسبوع و تبتنا للعرس
خيمه مركب لفريك أسمها خيمت أرك و أتجيهها الناس كاملها و أتجيب
أمعاهها قدواتها.

وتحفل لعروس حت وتلبس ملحفة من النيل ، ويلبس لعريس حول من النيل
و يتغمبر عن ارواكيح لكبار مدت العرس و إلين يوف العرس اتكيس
لمر

أهلها و يمشي الراجل شور أهل وإتم يجابر ألاف اليل إلين يجمع
أهلها هي ارحيل إمشوها شور خيمتها واتعود مستقلة أوحدها هي

و راجلها.

The Marriage (home) or the Marriage (act/ceremony).

Marriage in Mauritania is a very important event since every man to come of age is supposed to marry (have a home). First he goes looking for an eligible woman that pleases him or he takes his uncle's daughter. He sends her a message (asking if she will marry him). If she accepts, the ones responsible for her come and join her (to him) in marriage. (Then) he (the groom) gives them the dowry. The drums beat for the three nights of the joining ceremony, the one day of the ceremony at the groom's home and three nights (after that) for "the week." (Next we) build the marriage a tent (home) from out of the encampment (group of tents), the name (of which) is "Tent in the clearing." And all the people come to her (the tent) and they bring large meals. They get all dressed up for the marriage ceremony. She wears a shinny (Mauritanian) dress and the groom wears a shinny turban. They cover their faces before important people throughout the marriage ceremony. When the marriage ceremony is over, she goes to her family (relatives) and the man to his family (relatives). They (continue to) meet together only at night until her parents bring her things together. They make her go to (her own) tent and she is free to be one, she and her husband.

Work done with Kaberould Beye, January 12, 1994

حملت البلديه

ليلت ١٢ يناير عند الساعه ١٢ تماما انطلقت حملت البلديه .
خاظت الناس من اديارها و وكفت اعلى الطرکوات عواحيات الدشر،
وگام لاصوات .

عاکب ذاك بدقائق گام للاف من الوتات متالبين اعلي الشوارع
رافدين الناس ال اتعيط و إتزوگ و اتزعرت إلين انصمكت الناس
ولا اتل حد إگد يسمع شي اسو شنه مدت ذيك اليل كامل.

امع اصباح او عينا اعلا لعليات كلهم تبني خيمتها (مكتبها)
و امفرشتها و داير فيها اماعين و مسجیل ، و امعلگ اعليها رايه
و ابواق و شعار حزبها المفضل .

اخلگ اص الطرب الهول و ارکيم .
و عاد اجماع آلا في لقيام الناس آتي و اتگول لغن،
اسمعت کيفان في آکطاع بين حزبين :

کال لول :

سابق ما رين کاملين مد ترضين لام
لاه انتم امعارضين إلى يوم القيام

کال الثاني :

إلا تميت امعارضين و اتعبت بالدوام
اخن هاذا ناجحين سابق يوم القيام .

The Electoral Campaign for Mayors

The night of the 13th of January when 12 o'clock arrives the mayoral electoral campaign opens (is liberated). The people go out from their houses and stand in the streets, liven up the city and start making noise.

After some minutes, come thousands of cars, one after the other, along the roads, carrying people who are crying out, yelling and making a special sound (commonly made by women at celebrations), until the people are deafened and no one can hear anything whatsoever. This goes on all night long.

In the morning, we wake up and each of the women builds her tent, sets up the interior, puts the tea things in it, a tape recorder, hangs a political banner on the tent, (puts) an amplifier (inside the tent) and (puts) the symbol of her chosen party (up).

An air of happiness is created: singing and dancing. A group forms only under the tent, people drink tea and say poems. I heard verses of poetry (from) debating (going on) between two parties: The first one said:

"Until we find someone (who) satisfies all of us together, we will continue to oppose (the other party) until the last day."

The second one said:

"If you continue to oppose us, you'll become chronically tired, we (are ceratin we've) won (this election) before (and even until) the last day."

Work done with Kaber ould Beye, January 30 1994

قرية اغمبيت

اغمبيت قرية اصغير بينها امع تجكجه عاصمت تكانت ٧٠ كيل
 كبلتها ، احذاها من شرک انبط و ازوير من ساحل و کلب اغشکوگیت
 من تل و اگليب اگرافيف من کبل .

فما يتعلق باتراب تكوينها الجلوجي :

القرية (الواد) مبني اعلى احواشي واد اکبير ینگال

الواد لبيظ اکبر واد في تكانت .

و اترابها امطيينها لحجار و اسدر و انخل و فيها الزيرات و

الکيع و لديات اسغيرين .

سكانها قدر ٢٠٠ اسره بيظان کاملين و لغتهم الحسانية امحافطين

اعلا ياپسر من عادات أهل البادية القديمين .

اقتصادهم اهم ال فيه اغريس انخل کل خيمه عندها ازريب من انخل

تحرث تحت الکمح و الخضر و إعدل احريثت لخريف إلين اتج اسحاب

و تتمعلم لارض و يشرب الکيع.

Aghlembeet (Kaber's villiage)

Aghlembeet is a small village. In relation to Tidjikja, the capitol of Tagant, (she is) 70 kilometers south of her. Near her on the east (is the village of) N'bot and Zwaira to the west. The mountain Aghshegogeet (is) to the north and a little mountain (called) Igrafeef (is) to the south. (Igrafeef means bears.)

As concerns the land (topography): The village (often known by its wadi) is built on the sides of a big wadi called the White Wadi, the biggest in the Tagant. Her land is covered with rocks, trees and palm trees. She has hills and fields and many little wadis.

Her (the village's) population is about 200 families, all Maures. Their language is Hassaniya. (They are) preserving many of their old customs from the country.

The most important industry (that is in her) is planting palm trees. Each family has an orchard of palm trees. (They) grow wheat and vegetables under them. They make gardens in the rainy season and when the rains come (the water) makes the soil good and the fields drink (the water).

Work done with Kaberould Beye, February 2, 1994

الكَيْطَن

الكَيْطَن فرص مهم للناس آل ساكن في ادشور لكبارات ،
والرحال آل في البادية للراحة .
أهل الدشر يستراح من جو الدشر و الحيات المانع، و الرحال
يستراح من التنكال من ابلید شور آخر .
و يجابر کاملین في الودیان ال عادة فيهم انخل في تكانت
و ادرار . و هاذ الناس ال اتج امكيطن ماه سیان : فيها شي
عند انخل و فيها شي الا کایس وحدين يعرفهم بانخلهم .

والکَيْطَن اتعود اعلى مرحلتين :
الكَيْطَن الخطر و اعود فيها لبلج مازال اخطر و ماسخ و توکل
الناس و اقول أن اصحيح .
و المرحل الثاني اعود لبلج اصفر واحمر و احل و اتم الناس اتکلع
إلین إطیب و اعود اتمر کامل ينقطع کامل ويندار في ازکایب
و کلها یكَبْظ حَرعت و يرجع شور بل امنين جاو امکيطنين .

Date Season (in Mauritania).

Date season is an important occasion for people who live in the big cities and the nomads of the country to rest. Away from the city they rest from the atmosphere of the city and the difficult life. The nomads rest from moving from one place to another. They all come together in wadis (dry river beds) that habitually have palm trees in them in (the regions) of Tagant and Adrar. These people who come pass the date season, but not in the same way: some own palm trees and some go to others they know (who) own palm trees.

The date season has two parts: The green date season has "liblah," (the kind of date that is) still green and bitter. The people eat it and say it is good for one's health. The second part has "liblah," (the kind of date that is) yellow and red and sweet. The people take continuously - as they have need (from the palm tree). When (the dates) become ripe and all of them are (mature) dates, (one) harvests all (of the dates) and puts them into sacs. Each (of the people) take their portion and return to the place they came from (before) date season.

Work done with Kaber ould Beye, February 3, 1994

أرمضان

ما اتلاو يكون أيام أكلال عن إهل شهر أرمضان . اشهر ال
إلين إج تتبدل الحيات في كل المسایل :
اتكل الحركة في انهار وتكثر في اليل و إكل لوکیل في
انهار و اشراب والکمی من الفجر إلین إعود المغرب عاکب
لفطور .

الناس الکایل اتعود امکدر ولاه طاحک بیها ال اعطاش و
اجباع و اتواری آتای والدير .

في شهر أرمضان كل حد ماه موجوع و ال امسافر و بالغ
فرظ اعليه إصوم أسو راجل وال أمر و اسو شاب وال شيبان
إلين إعود أدهميس اتکوم الناس کامل اتحضر لفظور و ينطرح
اتمر و ازريگ و انش واطاجين ويعمر لاتاي واتجمع كل خيمة
(اسرة) اعلى افطورها و إتم يتحراو آذان لمسید ليالك يفطر .
إلين إذن لمام تfurter الناس و تعطی ساعه عاکب ذاک و تتعش
و تصهر إلين يلحک وقت اصحور تشرب انش و آتي و تمسک إلين لفظور .

Ramadan (in general).

There remains only a few days before the appearance of the moon (which begins the month of) Ramadan. The month, when it comes, changes life in every way. Movement during the day diminishes, but (it) increases during the night. Eating diminishes during the day, (as well as) drinking and smoking, from early in the morning until evening comes (when the sun sets), after (which comes) the breaking of the fast. Over the noon hour people (easily) become upset. They don't laugh because (they are) thirsty, hungry and desirous of tea (drinking) and tobacco (smoking).

During the month of Ramadan, everyone who is not sick or traveling but is physically mature (for a man this means he is 18, for a woman it means she is ovulating) is obligated to fast, whether man or woman, whether young or old.

When evening comes, all the people prepare for the breaking of the fast. They put out dates and "zrig" (sweet milk), soup (from millet), and snacks. They put water on for tea and the whole family gathers together around their evening breakfast and waits for permission from the mosque so they can break the fast. When the "Imam" (prayer caller/leader) gives permission, the people (start to) eat (but) they wait an hour after permission (is given) to eat supper. Then they stay awake until the morning eating hour to drink soup and have tea. (After this) they stop eating or drinking anything until the evening breakfast.

شي من العادات ال تعدل في ارمضان

أرمضان متخالف امع الشهر لآخرين وذ ال كان يعدل سابك
ما يعدل فيه .

الشباب ال كان إكيس أنساتهم في اليل ما اتلاو إكسوهم
اتل خالك الا تخراص التلفزة ولذاعه ال اتوخط في ارمضان
برامج مهمه عند الناس كامل شبان و اكهول .
في أرمضان يعدل المدح ال هو شكر ارسول و اصحاب .

ارمضان فيه ليل باخبارها ينكالها ليلت ٢٧ ((ليلة القدر))
هاذ اليل اعظيم عند الموريتانيين و عاداتهم اعليها ياسرين
إكول ان أجنون في أرمضان ما إظر ارواكيج إلين ليلت سبع
و عشرين ينطلس و إعود إظر و كل اركاج من يالت يحذر منهم
يصكل دار و كتخان وإحجب وإسم وإبات يعبد إلين إعود الصبح.

Some Customs We Do during Ramadan

Ramadan differs from other months in that what one does before it (comes) cannot be done in it. The youth that use to go (to visit) their girlfriends in the night, may not go to (see) them (anymore). All there is (to do) is watch television and (listen to) the news which is broadcast during Ramadan, programs important for all people, young and old. During Ramadan they make up canticles (or verses) that praise the apostle and his friends.

Ramadam has a night of stories or events spoken of as the night of the 27th ("Leila El Qader"). This night is precious to Mauritaniens (because) of its many customs.

It is said that evil spirits will not do any harm to human beings during Ramadan, (but) when the night of the 27th (comes) they are released to do harm (again). All human beings must watch out for them. They clean their house, (wash) the dishes, read koranic verses (for protection) and say the name of God (for protection). One passes the night practicing religion (praying and reading the koran) until the morning comes.

Work done with Kaber ould Beye, February 8, 1994

حالت السوق في أرمضان سابق العيد

حد امش في ارمضان وادخل المرمص يلحكها املان من كل
انواع مرصنديس :

الخضر ، الفواكه و المشروبات ال تعمل في أرمضان.

وفي العشري الثاني من اشهر تمتل المرمص من الباس كل انواع
ادراريع واتراك واسراويل ولملاحف و الحزم و الرمبيات و انعايل
وكل حد حتم اعليه يشري الباس لاولاد و اعيال و أهل و الناس ال
ساكن عند .

وكل راجل عند اسرة لا بدال من يشري كبش و يذبح يوم العيد
و الا عاد إكد يشري الباس و كبش لانساب إعدلها.
يوم العيد تلبس الناس كامل الباس اجديد و اتظل تطرب و
توكل انهار كامل.

How it is (the situation) in the Market
during Ramadan just before the Feast.

(If) one goes and enters the market during Ramadan, (when you) reach her (you find her) full of all kinds of merchandise: vegetables, fruit, drinks, whatever you use in Ramadan.

During the last 10 (days) of the month, the market is (habitually) full of clothes of all kinds: men's robes, shirts and pants, women's outer dresses, skirts/slips, undergarments (slips and blouses or t-shirts) and shoes ... And it is very important for every (man) to buy clothes for his children, his wife, his parents (or relatives) and all the people living with him (in his home).

Every man having a family (meaning, he is married) must buy a ram and sacrifice it the day of the feast. And if he is also able to buy clothes and a ram for his in-laws, he does so.

The day of the feast all the people dress in new clothes and spend the day merrymaking and you eat all day (long).

Work done by Kaber ould Beye, February 10, 1994

انهار لكبير: العيد

من الطبيعي ان اتعم الفرح وتتبدل الحيات
 في يوم انهار لكبير يوم عيد الفطر السبب
 في ذلك هو عودان الناس لاه اتوادع ارمضان
 خاطر العام ال كمال فيه المثل : ((خاطر العام لا تتفطح فيه))
 هاذ معناه ان اكثرية الحبي كانت صايم ولاه تنفط عنها
 غبرت الصوم وتشهر وتظهر في مظهر زين و اظل مستراحين
 ومجايرين انهار فر.

عند امنين يصبح الصبح اكون الرجال امركا فطراتهم و
 اكسموهم اعلى الفقراء و المساكين ويلبس الباسهم و اكيس
 اصلا العيد الين يرجع يذبح اعيادهم .
 لعليات الهم نوب يتحفل : يتحناو و يظفر و اتلالهم الا
 يلبس الباسهم و يمش اوزور اهااليهم هم و التترك و الرجال
 و الشباب كلها يمش اوزور اصحاب واقرباين وال منهم
 اكيس المسرحيات وابليدات الطرب .

The Great Day of The Feast.

It is natural for happiness to spread and life to change through out the day of this great holiday; the feast day (known as) "El Vetar." The reason is that people are saying goodbye to Ramadan, the stranger of the year, as the proverb says - "Stranger of the year, don't shun him." This means most of those who were alive, those who were fasting, will shake off the dust of fasting. They beautify themselves and show a beautiful appearance. They pass the day resting and meeting each other all day long.

At the break of (the feast) day the men get up and give out their alms. They share with the poor and those who have nothing. They wear their (nice) clothes and go and do the feast prayer. When they return they sacrifice their rams (sacrifices).

It has been a week or so since the women dressed up. They dye (their feet and hands) and do up their hair. They must only to put on their clothes and go visit their relatives. They (the women) and their children, the men (of age) and the young (men) all go to visit their friends and relatives. And some of them go to parties (evening dances) and to places of leisure (the beach or camel races).

Work done with Kaber ould Beye, February 14, 1994

الصوم

صوم أرمضان اركيز الرابع من اركايز الاسلام الخمسة أ مع
الشهادات الثنتين واصل وازك و الحج .

الصوم معناه توکاف لوکیل واشراب و العلاقة الجنسية
من الفجر إلین المغرب عاکب اطيح الشمس .
الصائم إعود إحس بان ادخل جو اجدید : احرام اعليه
یکذب احرام اعليه یزن و ال یوکل الغيبة وال یسرک
معناه ان احرام اعليه کل عمل ما یرضی الله .

اهمية الصوم

الصوم إطبب الناس اعلى اصبر و إعود الفقير و المحتاج
اعلنهم إکد إفوت يوم ما کال ولا شرب ولا شرب اتاي ولا
اکماو ولا فکر فینهم یسرک .
الصوم إعدل الغني إطوگ طعمت الجوع ولعطش و یعرف حرهم
و بالتالي إعود أساعد الفقراء و إصدک اعليهم بیه ال
اعرف ان الجوع ماه آمونک لانهم کان ما قادیلهم شي فیهم
إکول المثل :
(اشعارف البادن للظامر)

The Fast (of Ramadan).

The fast of Ramadan is the fourth pillar of the five pillars of Islam - the two testimonies ("shehedat"), prayer, alms and pilgrimage. The fast means that you stop eating, drinking and having sexual relations from early in the morning (just before the sun rises) until night (after sunset). The one who fasts feels as though he enters a new atmosphere: it is a sin for him to lie, to commit adultery, to talk behind someone's back or steal. This means it is a sin to do any act that is not honoring to God.

The Importance of Fasting.

Fasting teaches people to be patient. It teaches the poor and needy that they can go a day without eating, drinking, having tea or smoking, without thinking they need to steal.

Fasting makes the rich taste hunger and thirst and lets him know pain/suffering. In the end, he becomes (desirous or motivated) to help the poor and give alms to them because he knows (now) that hunger is not comfortable. He didn't care a thing about them (before). A proverb says:

"What does plenty know about hunger?"

Work done with Kaber ould Beye, February 16, 1994

بسمن حال استقبل اهل انواكشوط الفطر

كان اليوم التالي من أرمضان وكانت الناس كامل
رجال اعليات و أشاشر في الريف في البادية وفي
ادشور اتحان هاذا انهار لكبير وكان كل شي جاهز
وباتت الناس تصت الذاعة إلين عادت الساعة
الثانية في الليل وخطت الجنه المختصه بمراقبت
هلال اشهر قرارها التالي وثبتت شوفان.

من قد اطلع متلاو الطرکوات من الناس و خلكت حیات
و نشاط ماه معقول؛ كل الناس افراح ظاحك منطرب،
و هاذا ارواي عادي الناس ياسر منها كان صايم و
عند الحق فن يفرح بالفطر ، وبعضهم فرحان بيه ال
يبغي الهول والطرب وفيها ال امفرح ان لاه يلبس الباس
اجديد وال بيه الا ان لاه يوكل اوكيل زين. وكل
الناس كانت متنكلي الفطر يغير المثل إكول ؛
(آل دون ساعة ما إخمم)).

How the People of Nouakchott Welcome the Feast of Ramadan.

It was the last day of Ramadan and all the people: men, women, children in the rural area, in the country and in the cities awaited this great day. Everything was ready and the people passed the night listening to the news until two o'clock in the morning came when the committee responsible for observing the new moon broadcasted their final decision, assuring (folks) of its sighting.

The next day in the morning the streets are full of people, life and excessive activity. Everyone is happy, laughing and gleeful. This situation is natural (since) many people were fasting and have the right to celebrate the feast. Some of them are happy because they like singing and being gleeful. Some of them are happy because they will wear new clothes. And some of them because they will eat nice food. All the people are anxious for the feast, but a proverb says:

"What the next hour brings is of no concern."

Work done with Kaber ould Beye, March 15, 1994

انواكشوط سكان ومساكن

من الل سنين وخاصة من السبعينات كُلت اسحاب
و جدبت الارض و كل اربيع و لحشيش ومات اصدر
والحيوانات .

عادت الناس فرظ اعليها تمشي من البادية ال
كانت ساكن فيها شور اتشور يكانها اتكد اتعيش
فيهم .

دفعت الناس كامل شور انواكشوط واصبح انواكشوط
الا جماع انكار : فيه الناس كامل بكل انواعها :
اهل البادية ، اهل اتشور والحراثة .

كل حد من الناس جات كان لا بدال من مسكن
و اتشاش من اتراب و هاذ هو سبب وجود الكبات
و الكزرات اعلى احواشي الدشر . الكبة عبارة :
عن الكثير من المساكن المبنية من اجلف و متكارب
و لاه مخط ، و الكزر عادة الا من لمبارات
المتراكبة و البركة واديار .

تجبر لخيام في ادبار الزينات و في لمبارات
و الساعات و تجبر الحيوانات عند اهل القصر و اهل
لبراك .

Nouakchott's Inhabitants and Living Quarters

Many years ago, in about the seventies, the rains diminished and the pastures were eradicated, the foliage and the hay/grass diminished and the trees and animals died. The people became obligated to go from the country where they used to live to the cities so they could subsist in them.

All the people rushed to Nouakchott and Nouakchott became a diverse gathering. In her (you find) all kinds of people, (those) from the bush, the city and the farms. Each one of the people that come must have a home or a plot (of land) to live on. And this is the reason for the "Kebbé" ("Spill") and the "Gezra" (Squater town) on the edge of the city.

The Kebbé (one might say) is mostly homes built from wood, along side each other (in an) unplanned (fashion). The Gezrat is usually made up only of canvased frames close to each other, shacks and houses. (In the city,) you find tents (around) in nice houses (ie courtyards, as well as) canvased frames and public places. You find animals in front of the villas and the shacks.

Work done by Kaber ould Beye, February 20, 1994

انواكشوط التجارة

إكول المثل : ((الرام إلين إعود عينين يخلع))
 هاذ المثل انطبق اعلی انواكشوط ال الا عاد آباتيگ
 تجبر في كل دار بتيگ و في كل حي سوق و في كل شارع
 ياسر من لباتيگ و اطوييلات و تجبر في كل خيمة تاجر
 و ال تاجرة، معناه ان الناس عادت اكثريتها تجار
 و انواكشوط لاه إعود آباتيگ ويخلع طبعا كيفت الرام
 إلا عاد عينين .

من خصوصيات التجارة في انواكشوط ان التاجر ما إمارس
 شكل واحد من التجارة : تجبر التاجر أبيع ادو في
 البتيگ وإبيع فيه الباس المواد الغذائيه آلات اديار
 احديد الوتات وكل شي . وتبحر كاع يكان مل بتيگ وال
 طبيب وال مكانسي .

الميزة الثانية ظاهره ينگالها ((آتتيب))
 معناها ان الناس اتبيع و تشري ماه بالفظة ومرسنديس
 ما فرظ اعليه إعود اجديد.

Nouakchott: Commerce

A proverb says, "The head, when it becomes all eyes, makes (one) afraid." This proverb applies to Nouakchott, which has become just shops. In each house you find a shop and in each section of town a market and in each street lots of shops and sale tables. And in each home you find a male or female merchant. This means that most of the people become merchants and Nouakchott will become (all) stores that certainly makes one afraid, like a head thats become full of eyes.

(One) of the characteristics of merchants of Nouakchott (is that) a merchant does not do buisness with (just) one kind of merchandise - you find a merchant selling medicine in a shop where he (also) sells clothes, groceries, hardware, car parts and everything. You wonder whether he is the owner of the store or a doctor or a mechanic. (As concerns) the second characteristic, one says of this phenominon "itebtib," which means the people buy and sell without money, (with) merchandise that is not necessarily new.

Work done with Kaber ould Beye, February 22, 1994

النقل في انواكشوط

كل صباحي يوكف ياسر من الناس اعلي احواشي الطرقات
يتحراو شي يمش فيه . العمال ال ما عندهم وثات
خاصة و شرايكهم ماه اموفرالهم النقل و اتلاميذ تفرط اعليهم
الحاله إ بكر يكانهم يجبر وسيلت نقل و دائما خالك الهم
الا الكران و اكثر لوقات إعود املانين و املنكي فيهم
الناس من لور .

وسائل النقل في انواكشوط ماه واحد و تختلف حسب قدرت
ابساجة : فيه الوقات الزين ال الا عند البطارين ، و فيه
وثات تودروا ال تمشي الا اعلى اطريگ امسكم وعندها
اگواريج خاصة بيها ، فيه احمير شاريت ال يركبوها الا
الضعفائي ال في الكبات ، والخيال ال اتجر واتير وعندها
ابليدات خاصة بيها وكل حد مستكفي بوسيلت إكول المثل :
(كل حد حالت اتلاگ بلاخرة)

Transportation in Nouakchott

Every morning lots of people stand on the side of the road waiting (impatiently) for something to go in (to town). The workers who don't have a personal vehicle and their company does not provide for them transportation and the students, their situation obligates them to go early so they can find a means of transportation. As always, there are only the minibuses. Most of the time they are full with people hanging on behind.

The means of transportation (for one) in Nouakchott is not the same (for another) and the difference is due to the capability of the passenger. In Nouakchott (there are) good cars, which carry only their owners (bosses), and (there are) cars (referred to as) "Straight Ahead" (since) they go only along a straight course. (This kind of car) has garages especially (set aside) for it. And in Nouakchott (you have) donkey carts, which only the poor in the Kebbes ride, and the horse which draws a cart (with sides) and has her (own) special places.

Everyone is satisfied with his means (of transportation). A proverb is says, "Each one's means obtains his end."

Work done with Kaber ould Beye, February 24, 1994

اعليات انواكشوط ولعصار

اكليل من اعليات انواكشوط ال ماه في عصر .
العصر تنكال لاجماعة من لعليات متكاد في السن
جامعها شي اعل يم نادي برئيست وعندهم كيس
يجمع فيه مبلغ من الفطة يدفعوها كل اسبوع .
يجابر دائما يوم الجمعة عند وحد منهم .

لعليات لكبارات عصرهم وحد وظيفت انهم إعود
متعاونين امينهم إلى نفست وحد منهم و اتلات
اتسم اولدها إجوها وإعاونوها في لسم إنظموه
و إجولها الفطة وإعدل احتفال . ودائما إناد إكيو
و إطيب لوكيل للناس السلام .

بالنسبة لاشويبات الهجالات وظيفت العصر انهم
يجابر و إشد لخبار و إلى اتخيمت وحد منهم
إجوها كاملات وإنظمولها عرسها و إعاون فيه
اهلها و دائما عصرهم يلبس لباس مساوي و
يتوالاو اتسرف اشراب و لوكيل والتصفاك واركيص
والغن عند العرس .

Women of Nouakchott and their Social Groups.

Few are the women of Nouackchott that (are) not in a social group. A social group is said (to be) a group of women of (about) the same age. The gathering/meeting looks something like a club in that (there is) a president and they have a cash box with a sum of money that they (all) contribute to each week. They always meet on Friday at one of their homes.

The older women (have) their own social group. Its purpose is to assist (or help) one another. If one of them is giving birth and must name her child, they come to her and help her with the naming ceremony. They organize it, bring her money and prepare the ceremony. They always invite the singer and they cook the food for the people (who come) to greet (her family).

As concerns the young single women, the purpose of their social group is to meet and talk and when one of them marries, they all come to her and they organize her marriage and help her family with it. (The women) of the group always wear the same clothes (color and design) and concern themselves with serving the drinks and food and the clapping, dancing and singing of the marriage.

Work done with Kaber ould Beye, February 28, 1994

تسدير في انواكشوط

انهار هون ماه ابعيد امشيت نسر في انواكشوط
و جابتن التورس اعل صدرايات اراعيهم في نكر
كبتال .

اجبرت تحتهم عدد ما يوف من افكاريش والرجال
الطايبين اوكت احذاهم لاه انشوف هم افاش واحلين
لاحظت انهم متكسمين كل اجمع اعل جة و متباركه
امع اللعبة ال تختير : هاذ خاطين ظامت واحلين فيها
وذوك ينزل مرياس .

اصحاب مرياس اربع و فارگ بيهم اجماع اكبير و كل
فرقة عندها انصارها ال واحلين فيه الا تخرام النزل
وحدين منهم امان دورهم لياك ينزل في ابلد ذوك
ال لاه ينقلب .

اصحاب ظامت دائما الا اثنين والناس لخر الا اتخرم .
لاحظت ان ياسر من هاذ الناس الا تكوس ال ما عندهم
شي واحلين فيه و يكتل الوقت .

A Walk in Nouakchott

The other day not long ago I went for a walk in Nouakchott. The way brought me to those trees there in the middle of (the part of town called) "Capital." (There) under (those trees) I found an unending number of healthy young men and mature men. I stopped near by so I could see what they were getting into.

I noticed that they were formed into groups, each group to itself, playing what they prefer; these drawing (in the sand) "Thamit" (a game like checkers) and getting into it and those playing "maryas" (a card game).

The players of maryas are four (in number) and around them is a big group (of bystanders). Each team has fans that get into the game and watch them play. Some of them are waiting for their turn when they can play in the place of the one who will loose.

The checker game players are always only two (in number). The rest of the people just watch.

I observed that many of these people are without work because they have nothing to and are (just) killing time.

Work done with Kaber ould Beye, March 2, 1994

التبذير في انواكشوط عند العيد

التبذير مسل ما تنفع و نتايجهامحالي .
ومجتمعنا وخاصة في انواكشوط باد اعليه
التبذير برجالت واعليات ، فقراء واغنياء .
واتم الا شي معقول إلين إج العيد يخلك من
شي ما اتوصفولك ماه عينك، ويساو فيه
((لعم والفرطام)) وال عند ل شي وال ما عند ل شي.

الفقير ال ما إشتغل ولا عند المال لام إهم ان
إعدل لاهل كل شي إكد إصح ، العامل البسيط ال
منيفر وال ابلانتوه ويخلص اربع تلاف وال خمس
إكظ اعلى المرمز وإحاول يشري ازين نوع من
الباس لاولاد واعيال . والعامل لكبير ال اخلام
ياسر يمشي بيه شور المرمز و يصرف كامل في انهار
واحد ولا إفكر في مستقبل ، ولغنياء إبذر هم امل
يغير عندهم فيها الحق بيهم ال عندهم امناش
ما هم كيفت ذ لخرين ال الا لحمار وانساو المثل
ال إكول : ((آل لم شي يفصل فيه)).

Squandering in Nouakchott during the Holidays

To squander is a bad deed and its consequences are harmful. (In) our society, and especially in Nouakchott, squandering runs rampant among men and women, rich and poor. It is an accepted thing (shortly) before the holiday arrives. Some of what is done is unbelievable, unless you see it with your own eye. "The blind and the bald" - the one who has something and the one who has nothing, are equally responsible.

The poor man who has no job and has no savings seeks to do everything he can for his family. (One who does) blue-collar labor, like manual labor or guarding, which pays 4000 or 5000 UM, goes down to the market and tries to buy the best kind of clothes for his children and his wife. The more skilled laborer is paid more and he takes his pay to the market and spends it all in one day and doesn't think about the future.

Rich people are also wasteful but they have reason to because they have the where with all. They are not like the others who imitate (them), forgetting about the proverb that says

"The one who keeps something will need it."

Work done with Kaber ould Beye, March 8, 1994

مندر يكان لمر هي ال اتبذر وال الراجل

الرجال دائما إلوم لعليات وإكولونهم الا هم ال
إخسر الفظ عند لعياد و المناسبات بيهن لمر
لابدالها من املاحف زينات تلبسهم و ياسر من آلات
لحفول والبدلات ولرساق من اذهب وكيسان صالوهات
الحن وتختير اتعدل شي ما عدلوه اصحاباتها لياك
تتفخر اعليهن بيه و هذا هو ال عدل الرجال دائما
امعدلين ان لعليات الا هم ال إبذر الفظ .

لعليات هم لخرين امواسيات ان الرجال أخسر منهم
بيهم ال لابدالهم من ادرايع الزينات ال صوك وحد
منهم يشري اعشر املاحف ، وتات اتويوتا ونيسان ال
لابدالهم من الملايين .

وعاد الا كلهم إشكر اعلى لوخر التبذير وهو ابذر
من وانساو المثل : ((ال شكر شي إدير شي افبل)).

Is it the Woman that Squanders or the Man?

The men always criticize (with the intent to correct) the women by saying that they alone squander (trash) money during the feasts and special occasions because it is necessary for the woman to have pretty dresses to wear, make up, ear rings and bracelets of gold. They go to beauty shops (where they dye their skin). They prefer to do things that their friends have not done so they can glorify themselves with it. This is what makes the men always think that women alone are squandering money.

The women, on the other hand, think that the men squander more than they do because it is necessary for them to have nice outer garments; the price of one of which could pay for ten dresses. And cars, a Toyota or Nissan (4WD), it is necessary for them (to pay) millions (for one of these).

Each of them is critical of the wastefulness of the other, (even though) he is more wasteful than the other. They forget about the proverb (which says):

"The one who criticizes (puts down) something, (must)
put something (better) in its place."

Work done with Kaber ould Beye, March 10, 1994

تكوس في انواكشوط

من المعقول ان انواكشوط إمتل من تكوس و هاذ
ال امواسيه ان انواكشوط هو مركز الشغل في
موريتان : فيه الحكومة والوزارات ولدارات و
الشرايك لكبارات ورجال اعمال واعمال ولا اعمال
الحرفيه المدارس ال اتخرج اتلاميذ فيه اكبر عدد
من السكان .

الناس كامل تعرف الفظ وقيمتها عكس اهل البادي
في العمل والعيش .

إلين عاد انواكشوط ذ كيفت اوعار فيه اجبار الشغل
وكثرت تكوس في الشوارع وكدام الشرايك ولدارات
وفي اديار ما اتج الدار ما الحكّت فيها قدر
عشرين اركاج ساكن فيها ماه اولادها وهاذ ارواكيح
اممير اعليهم راجل واحد يمش في الدشر إلين
إعود وقت لقد وال لعش يرجع شور الدار ويوكل
ويشرب ويركد إلين إعود الصبح ولا يعتمد اعلى
روصهم ويعرف ال كال المثل :
(أم السارك ما أتم الا اتزغرت) .

Unemployment in Nouakchott

What is acceptable (to those) in Nouakchott (is that she is) full of unemployed persons. This is the situation in Nouakchott (because) it is the center of work for Mauritania. She has the government, the ministries, the administration, the big companies (enterprizes), business men and independent businesses. She has schools that educate students. In her is the greater part of the population. All the people know money and its value in contrast to the work and lifestyle of the country.

Since Nouakchott has become like this it is hard to find work in her. Unemployment increases in the streets (so people wait) in front of companies, administration buildings and houses. You can not find a house that doesn't have about twenty people living in it that are not true descendents of the parental inhabitants. These persons are cared for by one man. (These people) go into town until it is time for lunch or supper and they return to the house and eat, drink and sleep until the next day arrives. (These people) are not being responsible for themselves and they don't know (what) the proverb (means when) it says:

"The mother of the thief will not continue to yodel (celebrate)."

Work done with Kaber ould Beye, March 16, 1994

مشاكل تكوس في انواكشوط

الناس ال اتكوس في انواكشوط عندها ياسر من المشاكل حد إلود للشغل في شريك وال في إدار ما كافيت شهادت ولا معرفت بيه ياسر من العادات في المجتمع منها ان لا بدال إعود يعرف حد في الشريكة وال لدار وال عند قريب يشتغل فيهم وإبوس في العمل وال ول خيم اكبير وال يعرف شخصي اكبير تتوسطل في اهل الشريك وال في الحكومة

لعليات ماهم كيفت الرجال بيهم ال لمر عيشتها اعلى اهلها سابك تتخيم وإلين تتخيم راجلها فرظ اعليه إوفرلها كل شي ابغايتها فيه .

الرجال هم ال لابدالهم من الشغل بيهم ال الراجل إلين إعود ما إشتغل ما عند قيم ومطلوب من إعود ابخيمت اتجيبها الناس وهذا هو ال عدل الرجال في انواكشوط فاصلين في العمل ومن يال إلودول .
((ال اصبر يلحك الظل)) .

Problems of the Unemployed in Nouakchott

People out of work in Nouakchott have many problems. One looking for work with a company or in the administration, it is not enough for him to have a diploma or knowledge because of many of the customs in the society. On account of society it is necessary for him to know someone in the company or the administration or have a relative working in one of them (who uses his influence) to get him a post or (he has as connection through) an aristocrat or he may know a great personality who can mediate (for him) with the company or the government.

Women are not like the men because, for the woman, all her livelihood is the responsibility of her family until she is married. When she marries her husband is obligated to provide everything she needs. But it is necessary for men to have work because the men, when they have no work, have no worth. He is called upon to have a home and people should come to it. This makes work essential for a man in Nouakchott and he must look for it.

"The patient one, the shade reaches him."

Work done with Kaber ould Beye, March 17, 1994

ازدواجيت المدين ولغريگ في انواكشوط

كان الموريتاني إعيش في الفرکان ابعيد عن جو المدينة
وعند ثقافت الخاصة وحيات و نمطها المتميز : اديار اخيام
و وتات اجمال و احمير اقتصاد سرحت الحيوانات يتنكل من
مكان شور اوخر وفجأة اجبر المواطن الموريتاني نفس مفروظ
اعليها السكن في الدشر في جو ما كان يعرف : المدينة
والحضر والثقافة العصرية و لخلاط امع ثقافات العالم
وعاد لابدال من يتكيف امع التقدم التكنولوجي وهاذ هو سبب
وجود ازدواجيت البداوة والتمدن في انواكشوط مثلا تجبر
مول السيارة الزين المتقدمة وهو متقدم ومثقف إتم ماشي
أعلي كدروه إلين يتلاك امع صاحب إوكف لثنين في وسط
الشارع ويتلاو إشد لخبار و يگزل اطريگ ما بيهم انهم ما
يعرف انهم خالف بيهم الا انهم اتعود اعلي حيات البادية
الواسع ولا فيها مضايقة وإكد لبجاو إوكف امع صاحب وإشد
لخبار كيف ابقاو ولا مراهم حد كافلين اعليه اطريگ.

Joining the City and the Encampment in Nouakchott

Mauritanian life and existence use to be in the camps far from the atmosphere of the city. One has a special culture (there), his way of life is different: his houses are tents, his cars are camels and donkeys, his industry is to raise animals and he moves nomadically from one place to another. Incidentally, he finds himself a citizen of Mauritania (which) obligates him to be a city dweller in an atmosphere he has not known - the city, urbanization and modern culture. He mixes the cultures of the world. It becomes necessary for him to integrate himself to technological development. This is the reason for the existence of the joining of bush life and city life in Nouakchott. For example, you find the owner of a nice modern vehicle and he is civilized and educated, he drives along the road until he meets his friend, they stop in the middle of the road and begin a discussion. They block the road, not because each of them doesn't know they are (doing something that is) against the law but simply because they are accustomed to country life, (which is) vast and has no blockages. It is possible for a camel rider to stop with his friend and discuss (the latest news) as they desire and no one behind them has his road blocked off.

Work done with Kaber Ould Beye, March 20, 1994

العرس ولسم وجكوار في انواكشوط

جكوار كلم سحري مكبوظ من اسم جاكوار فرنسا في حرب
المصر عند امنين كان إكيو إحامر صوت الطيار إككتار
وعادت خبط وركم بلا مثيل .

و من ذيك الساعة إلى اليوم ما اتل يظك في انواكشوط
وال وحد امن ادشور لكبارات عرس ولا اسم ما عند فرقة
فيها خباط كتار وفيها كورجكينات (الرجال المستثيين)
الركامر .

وعاد الاحتفال ال ذنبت ينكال جكوار وتجبر لعليات دائما
شادين اخبار ادون منها البارح كانت اجماع من اشويبات
والكهلات شادين لخبار : الكهلات إكول ان ازين زمنهم
واشويبات إكول ان ازين زمنهم ال فيه جكوار والحيات
المتقدم و جاوبتهم وحد من لعليات بالمثل التالي :
(محدث الفن ما انزل ((

"Jaguar" Marriage and Naming Ceremonies in Nouakchott

"Jaguar" is a interesting word taken from the French name "Jaguar" during the war of the Sahara when there was a singer imitating the sound of the plane with his guitar. (It) became a hit and a dance without equal. From that time on until today there hasn't been in Nouakchott, or any other big city, a marriage or naming ceremony that hasn't had (this kind of) group with a guitar player and transvestite dancers. Ceremonies of this kind have become called "Jaguar" and you always find women discussing the event. During the most recent one (just) last night there was a gathering of young and elderly women talking among themselves. The older women were saying (it was) better in their day and the younger women were saying (it is) better these days (because) there is the "Jaguar" and the civilized life. One of the old women answered them with the following proverb:

"When we sang we didn't sing off key."

(Meaning: The old life had more class/style.)

Work done with Kaber ould Beye, March 22, 1994

اطفال السينما والفيديو في انواكسوط

خالگ ياسر من تركت انواكشوط ما عند من الشغل يكون سينما
ولا يلهيه يكون شد اخبار آكتيرات الهند وكبيات العالم لوخر
ال شوف في افلام سينما وفيديو .

هذا النوع من الترك ما اتل عند اخلاق ولا اتل كيفت الترك لخرين
ال امريبينهم اهلهم تربى صالح . الباسهم الا الباس كبيات
واكلامهم الا اكلام الهند والواحد منهم لابدال من اللفظ يدخل
بيها سينما والين ما اراها يمشي يصرگ وإبط الترك لخرين
ويكلع منهم فطتهم و عاد كاع يدايگ الا ابلماس ويتعطب
و إلين ما يگلب برامج سينما إدور الترك يرباو اعلي الخز
و يكبر اعليه خالگ مثل إكول : ((الشوكة من سقرتها امحدة))
معناه ان ((أخير ال ارعاها اكبل ما رaha)).

Children of the Movies and Videos in Nouakchott

There are alot of children in Nouakchott (who) have nothing to do except (go to) the movies. Nothing occupies them except conversation about Indian actors and the cowboys of another world that they see in the movies of the theater and video halls. This kind of child no longer has morals and is not like other children whose parents give them a proper education. Their clothes are only that of cowboys and their language is only that of India. When one of them must have money to enter the movie theater and he can't find it, he goes and steals (it) by hitting the other children and taking their money away. A war starts and they fight with knives and they injure (one another). If they don't change the cinema program, they will raise up evil children that will grow up (to be) that way. There is a proverb which says,

"The thorn is pointed from early on."

meaning that (it is)

"Better to watch out for something before you encounter it."

Work done with Kaber ould Beye, March 24, 1994

سوق التبتاب

هاذ السوق من اكبر اسواق العاصم ، إلين اتجيه اتشك
 ان سكان انواكشوط كاملين حصر فيه، وتتفكر بيهك ذ من
 البشر وبيك ذ من مرسنديس وبيك طريققت عمل ذ الناس
 ال ما امشكل اعليهم شي اسو هو شنه ، آبيع ابلا الغظ،
 ويشر وابع اجديد ولدرس ولا يكر آباتيك الا كلها
 يگعد وابع وال يوگف وابع وال إباتر ،
 ((آلا آباش جات غزات))

The Deal Maker's Market

This market is among the biggest of the markets in the capitol. When you come to her you think that the whole population of Nouakchott has come together in her. You are amazed by the masses, by all the merchandise and by the way the work of these people is not tied to anything whatsoever. They sell without money and they buy and sell new and old (things) without renting shops. Each one just sits down and sells or stands up and sells or barterers.

"Anyway it comes is alright."

Work done by Kaber ould Beye, March 28, 1994

حاشيت لبحر في انواكشوط

حد امش شور حاشيت لبحر يجبر ياسر من شي زين
الزيرات المصكل و لمواج ال تتلاقف و الناس ال جاي
من كل ازوروت الدشر بعضها إدور الكروج و بعضها
حوات و ياسر منها الا سدار . وال غريب في الشاطئ
ان اهل عندهم مييزات خاصة و لغة خاص : الحوات
إظل لابسين الباس اصفر و يدخل في لبحر راكبين افاليك
من اجلف و إجيب الحوت وإبيعوه للعليات .

ولاحظت ان الحوات ولعليات ال يشتغل اعلى حاشيت لبحر
عاداتهم ولغتهم سنكالي و هم موريتانيين .
سولت بيظان اكبير عن سبب ذاك كمال : « ياويل ال ما
شاف اسم لا اتعتول » و « الزرگ مألها الا اتراب » لا
إورطوك إدور يعكب يتتدم اعلى ذاك .

The Oceanside of Nouakchott

One who goes to the oceanside finds many nice things. Clean dunes, the movement of the waves (on the shore) and people who come from all parts of the city. Some of them want fresh air, some of them are fisherman and many of them are just walking around. What is unusual about those from the oceanside is that they have (their own) particular characteristics, (even) their language is unique. The fisherman spends the day wearing yellow clothes. They enter the ocean riding in a motorboat made from wood and bring back fish and sell them to women. I realized that the fishermen and women working on the shore (have) customs and language that are Senegalese, but they are Mauritanian. I asked a very old man the reason for this and he said to me:

"My son, "If one hasn't see the sky, don't show it to him."
and "What is thrown up will come back down to earth."

("What goes up must come down.")

Don't worry about them, afterwards they will regret it."

Work done with Kaber ould Beye, March 30, 1994

لاعمال الحر في انواكشوط

من ساعت ال خلكت الديموقراطية و طرحت الحكومة

برنامج ليبر ال عاد لاعمال الحر ينزاد يوم بعد

يوم: كثر المدارس الحر، و المستشفيات ، والمؤسسات

التجاري، و لا اتل حد عند عمل خاص بيه ولا اتلات

الحكومة عندها شي خاص بيه ، و عاد كل حد يعمل

اعلى حسب طاقت ، و اكثريت الناس عادت اتمارس

هاذا النوع من العمل « الا ج لاه اعلم العوم غرك »

Private Enterprize in Nouakchott

From the hour that democracy was born and the government put in place the capitalistic system, private enterprize increases by the day. Private schools increase and (so do) hospitals and the commercial establishment. There remains no one who has an unusual place (of control) over it. There remains no special role of the government in it. Everyone works according to his capability. Most people have come to know (practice) this kind of business.

"He who came to teach one to swim is drowned by him."

(Added note - the student masters the subject
better than his teacher.)

Work done with Kaber ould Beye, April 5, 1994

لعليات في انواكشوط والعمل الخاص

امن الثمانيات اعلى إلاه اطرات عقليات اجديد في المجتمع الموريتاني ، وخاصة في لعليات ال كان ما يشتغل؛ و مهمتهم الوحيد هي لكعاد في اديار ، وعمل المنزل، وشد لخبار ، و اسواق ؛ إلين اطرات هذ العقليات اجديد و خلكت السياسة لحزاب والانتخابات . عرف لعليات انهم من واجبهم إشارك في بناي الدولة و المجتمع وإكوم بدورهم . عاد إكوم من لكعاد ويشتغل ، وعدت اتشوف لمر تعمل امع الرجال في بيروها ، واتشارك في لنتخابات ، و تلعب دور اكبير في توعيت المجتمع . واترقات لمر ، وعاد لعليات عندهم التعاونيات والمؤسسات ، ويشتغل في كل الميادين . ولا اتلاو تاكلين اعلي الرجال . بيهم ال : ((لجرب ما إحكل ماه كف)) و ((ال ماه في كرشك لا تعمل اعليه))

The Special Work of Women in Nouakchott

(During the time) from the eighties until now, a new perspective was brought into Mauritanian society, especially for women as they did not use to work. Their sole responsibility was to stay at home, do housework, converse among themselves and gossip. When this new perspective came into being and politics, parties and elections came about, the women knew it was their duty to contribute to the building of the nation and the society. They are in to their role. They have gotten up from sitting around and they are working. Now you can see the woman working with men in offices. She participates in the elections and plays an important role in waking up society. The woman is being promoted. Women have come to own cooperatives and organizations. They work in every domain. They don't continue to count on men because:

"The one with scabies can only scratch it with his palm."

and

"If it isn't (already) in your stomach, don't try to digest it."

Work done with Kaber ould Beye, April 6, 1994

ملايت الصدك في انواكشوط

من الملاحظ كثر ملايت الصدك في انواكشوط اعلى امواشي
الطركوات و عند لبناك و المسدوات ولمرض ، وفي لمبديات،
و هذ الناس تجبر فيهم كل انواع البشر : المعوزين والعلايل
والناس ال جاي باسم الدين وحدين منهم يجمع شي ينكال
النذر: وهو هدي اتتعط لشخص تعتقد الناس ان اكرب الرب؛
مقابل الحصول اعلى مني يتمناه الشخص ال عاطي الهدي ؛

وفيهم الترك اسقار ال ينتهزوه فرض لياك يحصل اعلى الفظ.
و علي كل حال الطلب مسل ما تنفع ، ولا اكبلنا كاع ان
المعوزين يطلب ، الناس اصحاب ما من يالتهم يطلب .
إكول المثل ان :

((اعطيني ما اتخلي ال يبغييني))

يغير

((ال كان يكتل ما اتل إحشم)).

Those Who Beg for Alms in Nouakchott

It is known (understood) that there are many beggars in Nouakchott - along the sides of the streets, at the banks, the mosques, the markets, and on the roads. Among these people you will find all kinds of human beings: handicapped, mutants, people that come in the name of religion, some are collecting things for what they call a vow (of consecration). It is a gift given to a person the people believe is close to God in exchange for a wish that the person who gave the gift desires. Among (the beggars) are small children who take advantage of the situation so they can get (easy) money. In any case, asking for things is not appropriate. But if we accept that the handicapped beg, the healthy people must not beg. A proverb says:

" 'Give me' doesn't let someone like me."

But

"What use to kill, won't even shame."

(What use to bring death doesn't even bring shame now.)

Work done with Kaber ould Beye, April 7, 1994

المراكة

((ال باق يكذب إبعد اشهود))

خالگ فئة من الشباب في انواكشوط ينكالها المراكّة وال
الكذاب، الواحد منهم إظل انهار كامل يسدر في الصالوهات
والمحلات العمومية ، إلين اج المد ما تعرف إكول ان هو
اسم وهو اتراب وان يعرف كل شي وعند كل شي ولا خالگ
حد اشبه من في الدنيا.

والواقع ان هذ ال يحكي ما عند اساس ولاه خالگ يكون في
خيال هو الواسع .

هذ الناس عاجزين عن تحقيق احلامهم وعاد إحقوها في الخيال،
وعجز عن تعويض النقص ال إعان من و عاد إعوضوه في الخيال .
و إحاول بكل وسائلهم يدخل المجتمع وخاصة الناس ال ما
كانت تعرفهم اصلا ، وهي الحك ال باقي يكذب إبعد اشهود،
يغير بعد فات اعليهم بان ((الكذب تسك يغير ما اتحوش))
و ((لكذيب الا يوكف))

والناس ال يكذب اعليها ادور الا تعكب تطالع اعلی كذبهم
ولا اتلات تصنت الهم .

Swindlers

"The one who wants to lie distances (himself) from his witnesses."

There is among the youth of Nouakchott what we call "the deceiver" or "the liar." One of these (people) passes the whole day walking around to the meeting rooms and public gatherings. When he comes upon someone he does not know, he says, "I am the sky and the ground" and that he knows everything and has everything and that there is no one better than him in the whole world. But the reality is that what he recounts has no foundation and doesn't exist, except in his imagination (which) is vast.

These people are not able to obtain their dreams so they have to obtain them through their imagination. They weren't able to realize (fill) what they lack, which distresses them, so they have to compensate for it with their imagination. They try by every means to enter into society, especially (by using) the people that haven't known them before hand. So, it is true that he (who) wants to lie distances (himself) from his witnesses, but they do not (realize) that

"A lie lets one drink but doesn't quench (one's thirst)"

and "The little lie will be stopped."

(meaning: the truth will eventually show itself)

and the people that lied to (society) later their lie is discovered and (society) doesn't keep listening to them.

Work done with Kaber Ould Beye, April 28, 1994

الكهلات ال امسميين روصهم لعزب

كط اسمعن في ال يسبگ ذ ((ال ارخات سن یرخيها))
 واليوم عاد العكس شفن الكهلات ال الوجد ما اتلاتلها
 ليل من انهار ال امعدلانها اطفيل ما زال افمها طعمت
 البزول وبنها مازالت عزب وحد اسم احذاها الكهل یدخل
 منها ظيگ واتدير اعليه ضريبة فرظ اعليه یدفعها الها
 من الفطة و تمشي بيه شور عصرها وإحلفوه ان ما اتل
 یسمي لكهول مدى الحيات .

هاذ النوع من لعلیات الكهلات في انواکشوط ال ما یكبل
 اتشيبين ماه محترم بيه ال ما احترم راص
 إكول المثل : ((ال دایر لمهاب یطلع بيها روص اصدر))
 وإكول مثل اوخر : ((دیر راصك في لحشیش یوكلوه لحمیر))
 ولا هم ال ضیع روصهم و منیالتهم إخل عنهم ذ ال كآبطهم وإول
 اعلى آخرتهم :

((الدنيا ما عاكبتھا ماه لآخر))

((و ال اخلک مات))

The Old Women that Call Themselves Virgins.

Have we heard before now that "The one who is set free by (a certain) age, (must also) set himself free (from it)." But today it is the opposite! We've seen old women where one of them doesn't even have the night of a day left but she acts like a young girl with the taste of (her mother's) breast still in her mouth. And furthermore, (she acts as if) she is still a virgin. One who calls her an "old woman" (in her hearing) gets on her bad side and she lays a fine on him. He is obligated to pay it to her in money (without exception). She takes him to her friends (a social group) and they make him swear that he will not call (someone) an "old woman" for the rest of his life.

This kind of old woman in Nouakchott doesn't accept getting old. She is not respected because she doesn't respect herself. A proverb says

"The one desiring respect climbs to the top of the trees."

(The one desiring respect has to earn it.)

And another proverb says

"Put your head in the hay and the donkeys will eat it."

(meaning: the old woman brings about her own disrespect.)

They are only spoiling themselves and they should leave what has preoccupied (taken) them and come back to (thinking about) their afterlife.

"There is no world after this if it isn't the afterlife."

And, "What's born, dies!"

Work done with Kaber ould Beye, May 10, 1994

الشباب والبقى في انواكشوط

كانت الناس في مجتمعنا تعرف البقى و عاطيت قيم اكبير
 وكان اصلا الا حد إشوف حد وإشدل شي وإكون علاقتهم .
 واليوم اتبدل الحال وفقدت الحيات العاطفية قيمتها
 بيها ياسر من المسائل ال اطرات للمجتمع وخاصة في
 انواكشوط ال لعليات فيه إطبق المثل :
 ((اصبع ما فيه شي ما إلتحس))

معناه ان راجل ما عند اللفظ ماه مهم . والرجال إكول:
 ((الا صوگ فوگ)) وصبحت الناس هون متخازي وهاذ هو سبب
 انتشاراتحوير ال عاد ياسر في انواكشوط إكول واحد شاعر :
 اندرت اعلي مد في الكبات
 ما كط اعليها حد اندر
 لمر توحوير والطافات
 والب شيبان يوحوير .

كن شادين لخبار وناقشنا الموضوع وقدمت ان نصايح امثال منها:
 ((اسمع اكلام امبييكنك لا تسمع اكلام امطحيكنك))
 ((إدير خمس ال ما يكلع عشر)) ((ال ما اصراط شي ما يوحل))
 عسكم من لمراض ال ما انجبر الها ادو .

Young People and Love in Nouakchott

People in our society use to know love and gave it great value. In the past one had only to see another and have feelings for him or her and start their relationship. Today the situation is changing and the feeling for life has lost its value. Because of this many things are new to society and unique to Nouakchott where the women apply this proverb:

"The finger without anything on it isn't licked."

This means that the man without money isn't important. And the men say:

"Only for its real price."

(Meaning - Not until the deal is done)

So now the people have become tricksters and this is the reason for the spread of prostitution that has become plentiful in Nouakchott. One of the poets says:

I discovered a family in the slums.

Someone else had not yet discovered her.

The woman and her daughters do prostitution.

And even the old man does prostitution.

We've discussed and analysed this subject (together) and I gave some advice by way of proverbs. Among them:

"Hear the words that make you cry,
don't hear the words that make you laugh."

"Five can do what ten cannot undo."

"Just don't swallow something
and it won't get stuck (in your throat)."

Watch out for the sickness that doesn't have a known cure.

Work done with Kaberould Beye, May 12, 1994

التخلي في المجتمع الموريتاني

الرجال ولعليات في موريتان ال ما كط اتخلو)) ينعد بروض لصباع))، وبذاك السبب عادت التخلي عادي إكول الناس)) الا اتحابين وكلن اباكاول اشوارب)) و ((ال امش ابكد لا إرد)) يغير ذ كامل ماه حك التخلي ما تنفع ولا تتواس بيها ال نتائجها امحالي في الرجال ولعليات والترك ال إخل ، وفي الاخير امحالي في المجتمع والدولة)) ما تصلح ال ما اتخصر)).

ياسر امن الناس واضل ان التخلي امحالي ولاه امقابل شي ، يغير فارطتها اعليه الحالة ((والفارظ واسيها خصل)) و اسباب كشرت التخلي في موريتان هم : ان العرس يعدل من دون دراسة معناه ان الراجل الا إشوف امر اليوم ويمشي يحطبها و إشدما ما يعرف شي عنها ولا عن اهلها ، ولا يتخمم في حيات امعها في المستقبل ،

إلين إعود خيم إتم كلهم يظهرل شي في لوخر ما كان يتوقع وإج المشاكل امبينهم وإعود الحل الا التخلي.

Divorce in Mauritanian Society

Men and women in Mauritania that haven't yet divorced, "we can count by finger tip" ("on one hand," they are so few). This is the reason divorce is so common. The people say:

"We (all) kiss each other but each one's lips stay with him."

and

"If he leaves in person, pray he will never return."

But all of this isn't true. Divorce isn't good. Do not do it because it has bad consequences for men, women and the children that are left. Lastly, its bad for society and the country.

"Don't repair what isn't broken."

For many of the people it is clear that divorce is bad and there is no benefit in it, but the situation (of the society) obligates them to do it.

"Obligation makes it a good deed."

The reason for so much divorce in Mauritania is that the marriage act is done before the marriage proper. Meaning the man sees the woman (one) day and he goes and proposes to her and marries her, (but) he does not know anything about her or her family, nor has he thought about life with her in the future. When they become a family each one discovers something in the other that wasn't seen before and problems come between them and the only solution becomes divorce.

Work done with Kaberould Beye, May 16, 1994

سوق الحيوانات في انواكشوط

هون في انواكشوط سوق اكبير في كبت المربط . املان من لغنم :
لمعيز و انعاج و لكباش وفي هذ ليام ال كدام العيد انزاد
الحيوان في السوق وكثر زوار السوق كل حد إدور كبش إعيد بيه
وحددين يشر اكباش اكبار بياسر من الفطة وال يشري نعج وال عنز
اهين من ذاك . وحددين من الناس عندهم إكليانهم يسلف من عندهم .

حد ادخل السوق اليوم يسمع ياسر من اتساويم والطلب و التشفع
هذ إدور الصوك ينتگم عنهم وذوك إدور نوع اسمن وال يختير
النعج وال يختير العنز وال يختير الكبش .

كان راجلين يتراوغ واحد إدور اسلف . و إكرر اعلى صاحب :
((ال ابلا دين ابلا رزق))

كال التيفاي : ((الدين ساعت اكبيظ هز لكفف بوساعت اخلاص
عظ اشفف))

كال الشراي : ((ال دار ادكيك افم يعرف اباش إبل)) يل ما كنت
نعرف ان لاه انخلصك ما نسلف من عندك . وفي الاخير اسفل كبش و
امشي فرحان .

The Livestock Market in Nouakchott

Here in Nouakchott a big market in the Kebbit El Marbot ("Hitching Post Slums") is full of small ruminants: male goats, rams and ewes. In these days just before the feast, the (number of) animals increase in the market and the number of visitors to the market augments. Each one wants a ewe to feast on. Some buy big ewes costing a lot of money and another buys a ram or a male goat which is cheaper. Some of the people borrow from their clients.

One who enters the market today hears a lot of bargaining. The inquirer and the bargainer, these (both) want a minimal price. And those want the fat kind. Another prefers a ram. Another prefers a female goat. And another prefers a ewe.

There were two men bargaining. One wanted credit and was repeating to his friend, "One without credit, (gets) no return." The salesman said, "(At) the moment one takes credit, he nods his head (yes), but at the moment of repayment, he bits his lip." The buyer said, "The one who puts powder in his mouth knows how to wet it." If I didn't know how I could pay you I would not borrow from you. Finally, he lends him the sheep and he goes away happy.

Work done with Kaber ould Beye, May 17, 1994

بسمن حال يستقبل اهل انواكشوط عيد الاضحى

ما مردود في ذ ليام في انواكشوط يكون اخبار العيد ،
 في الاسرة مشدودة اخبار العيد ، في الشارع مشدوده اخبار
 العيد وفي لسواق ومحلات لحفول الناس ((الا ويل امك يا الوران))
 ما باكي عنهم يكون ((ال ما عند مبيت ليل)) ولا اجبر وسيل اسو
 شنه إكد يجبر الفطة والغريب ان لمر تدخل صالوه اظفير و
 اتخلص ٢٠٠٠ اوقية ويركبلها طون من ازغب واتكيس صالوه
 الحن و اتخلص ياسر من الفطة لياك تحن وتدخل صالوه الحلوة
 واتخلص ياسر اوخر وتشري ياسر من لملاحف وهذا كامل اعلي
 احساب راجلها ولا غاديلها في ال يعكب ذاك .

اخلگ حوار امبين راجل و امر كال الها ذ ما إكد إصح من لخصار ،
 كالتل : ((الا الحكّت الناس عور اكصر في عينك)) وان امحابات
 كاملات امعدلات ذ وان الا وحد منهم .
 كال الها لاه نعطيك الفطة يغير بعد إلين ما اتراي شي توكلية
 عاكب العيد لا اتلومي يكون راصك .
 ((ال بيه ايد ما توجع)) .

How the People of Nouakchott Welcome the Feast of Sacrifice

Nothing is discussed these days in Nouakchott except what concerns the feast. In the home, what concerns the feast is discussed. In the streets, what concerns the feast is discussed, and in the markets and beauty shops. The people (say), "Only beware your mother, you the last one." No one is left except "the one who doesn't have (the usual with which) to pass the night" as he has no means whatsoever to find money.

It is astonishing that a woman enters a hair styling or augmenting shop and spends 3,000 Ouguiyas and adds to her head a ton of hair. Then she goes to a dying shop and spends lots of money to get (her skin) dyed. (Then) she enters a skin care shop (where hair is removed) where she spends even more. She buys lots of Mauritanian dresses. This is all on her husband's account and she doesn't worry about what (may come) later on.

There is debate between the man and the woman. He says to her that this wastefulness is not appropriate. She says to him, "If you've reached one-eyed people, partially close one of your eyes" and "I and my friends all do this, I am only one of them." He says to her, "I will give you the money, but when you don't find anything to eat after the feast, don't blame anyone but yourself." "What one does with his own hand won't hurt him."

Work done with Kaber ould Beye, May 18, 1994

((ال كثر ينفطل))

اشويبات وامفيكرش في انواكشوط عاد الا كيف امردت لغراب
امع عيش رخم : اتلا لاه إحامر كوطرتها ولا كد و مرت اعليه
كوطرت وعاد الا يتخبع هم. زاد مارگ فيهم نوع ينكال ديسكتات
وجينكات هامهم إعود آربيين وال امركيين و امشاو عن
عادات اهلهم وطبايعهم والا إحاول بكا وسائلهم يگبظ حيات اهل
الغرب و عندينهم بعد ((الا إفكن من ال ما ابخل شي ولا آز شي))
ديسكتات تلمكهم دائما الا امعلكات مكات اكبور املانين الا من آلات
مكياچ ويربط انعايل اكدامهم اطوال و يمش يدخل ابوت اصحابهم
جينكات ويرگم امعاهم وياسر من الناس إكولهم الا العاهرات
و هم ماهم كاملات عاهرات يغير المثل إكول : ((لم احوار امع
لحمار إعلم اشهيگ وال انهيگ)).

جينكات الا اجدعان ال دائما متكبطين و رابطين بوطات و إدور
لرساق في ايديهم ورگاص وإحسن روصهم احسان خاص و ياسر منهم
يصرگ وعادات الناس اتكول الهم الا بنصيات بيه ال :
((ال عظ لحش خلعال لحبل)).

"That which Increases Gets Noticed."

Young girls and boys (teenagers) in Nouakchott become just like what happened to the crow with the buzzard. He was (trying) to imitate her walk but was not able to. (While) imitating her walk he began just stamping (around). Among (the young there) has also appeared a kind (of person) called "Disketat" or "Jinkat" (who) seek to be European or American. They have left the customs of their families and what was natural for them and they are trying in every way to take on the life of the people of the west. I think about them - "Only keep us from (being like) the one that doesn't hold back but attains nothing (by it)."

The "Disketat" you always find with big sacs hanging (over their shoulder) full of only make up. They wear high-healed shoes and they go and enter the houses of their "Jinkat" friends and they dance with them. Many of the people call them prostitutes but they are not all prostitutes. But a proverb says: "Keep the baby camel with the donkey and he will teach him to bray (one way or another)."

A "Jinkat" is a teenage male that always wears western clothes (pants and shirt), wears hightops and puts bracelets on his arms. They are dancers and they cut their hair in a special cut (Mohawk hairdo). Many of them steal. People have come to call them all "bandits" (derogatory) because - "The one who has been bitten by the snake is afraid of the rope."

Work done with Kaber ould Beye, May 22, 1994

انواكشوط تستقبل خوان كارلوس و اعيال

من ساعت ال اصبح الصبح والناس واكف اعلى اكراع واحد اتحان
امجي ملك اسبان واعيال، إلين عادت الساعة الخامسة و خمس و
اربعين في الدحميس نزلت الطائرة في مطار انواكشوط . ونكز
الملك واعيال و استقبلهم رؤس الدولة واعيال واعضاء الحكومة
والبعثات الدبلوماسية كان اول شي استقبلوهم بيه هو اثلاثين
اعمار انخبطت بالمدافع الثقيلة وركب الوتات . وكان الشارع
بين المطار وقصر الرئاسة احواشيه املانين من الناس ال اترغرت
وتركمز وتخطط اطبول واتحي الملك واعيال .

ازين مشهد كان هو صف اكبير من الرجال ال راكبين البل وعددهم
حوالي خمس مئة ابحاوي لابسين الباس الموريتانيين القديم كل واحد
منهم لابس دراعتين وحد خطر ولخر بيظ ولاو
حول من النيل و متحزم وفيد دهبوس وحاكم اخزامت جمل .

في اليل اعدل حفل اكبير في قصر الرئاسة اخلك فيه ياسر من
لغن واركيص الحديث والتقليدي في الحقيقة كان الاستقبال رابع
ولا بخلوه يكون شي ما يعرفوه و ((ال اعطي ال فيد ما يسم بخيل))
معناه ان شي ما اعدل
((ماه كره يغير اتعسريه))،

Nouakchott Welcomes John Carlos and his Wife

From the moment that morning began (to be morning) the people stood on one foot (in anticipation), waiting for the arrival of the king of Spain and his wife. When the hour of 5:45 in the evening came, the plane landed at the Nouakchott airport and the king and his wife descended. The president of the country and his wife received them (as well as) the members of the government and diplomatic missions. The first thing to welcome them was thirty rounds shot by a big gun. They loaded up into the cars and there were many people on the sides of the streets between the airport and the president's palace yelling (yodeling), dancing, beating drums, and wishing the king and his wife a long life. The best looking thing was a big column of men riding camels, their number being about 500 camel riders, wearing old traditional Mauritanian clothes. Each one of them wore two outer garments, one blue and one white, with a shinny turban wound around (his head) and a belt around his waist and in his hand - a club, (while the other hand) held the reins of his camel. At night they made a big celebration at the President's palace. There were lots of singers and dancers, (both) modern and traditional. The reception was really very nice! They didn't hold (anything) back unless it was something they didn't know (to do) - "The one who gives what is in his hand, don't call him stingy." This means, if something was not done - (It was) "not (because you) dislike (doing) it but (because) it is on your left (side)" - (Note: the left side is considered improper).

Work done with Kaber ould Beye, May 24, 1994

حكمة

خالگ راجل حکیم فی الزمن اللول کان عند یاسر من لموال
وعاش یاسر من الزمن و کثر عند لولاد ، إلین اتل إموت
عیط لولاد کاملین و اطلب منهم یجمعول حزم من لحطب و
جابوہال ، گام وعیط الول لکبیر امتن اولاد کاملین گال
اکسر ل هاذ حزمت لحطب ، حاول لولد مرات ولا کد یکسر الحزمة
گالهم بوهم فرگوها و کلکم یکسر منها عود واحد گام و
فرگوها وکلهم اکسر عود .

گالهم بوهم یا اولاد اسمعون ((إشوف الشیبان ال تاکی
ال ما إشوف الصب الواکف)) ((سال امجرب لا اتسال اطیب))
إلین تتفرگ وکلکم یمشی وحد لاه اتعود کیفت حزمت لحطب
ال فرگت وکلکم اکسر منها عود وإلین إتم فی ایلید ما إکد شی
یقلبکم یا اولاد اموسیکم الا اعلى الاتحاد واعرفون
((اشهاب واحد ما یگد)) و ((اید وحد ما اتصفک)).

Wisdom

There was a wise man (who lived) in the past, had much wealth, lived a long time and had many sons. When he was dying he called all his sons and he asked them to gather a bundle of sticks and bring it to him. He called his biggest son, the strongest of all his sons and he said, "Break this bundle of sticks for me." The son tried many times and was not able to break the bundle. Their father said to them, "Separate it and each of you break one stick from the bundle." They separated it and each one broke his stick. Their father said, "My sons, listen to me."

"What an old man can see lying down, a young man cannot see standing up."

"Ask the experienced one, don't ask the doctor."

"When you separate yourselves, each of you goes off by himself. You will become like the bundle you separated (where) each one broke one of her sticks. (But) if you continue together nothing will be able to turn you around. My sons, I advise you to be unified. (For) you know -

"One stick (all by itself) won't light up."

and "One hand (all by itself) can't clap."

Work done with Kaber ould Beye, May 26, 1994

اتلوميمر في انواكشوط

اتلوميمر ظاهرة امحالي ولا كانت ياسر في مجتمعا البدوي وظرك
عاردت ياسر في انواكشوط، وخاصة في هذ الاون ال فايت، امع اظهور
اجمايع ((دخل شي))،

اهل دخل شي هذ الا اجمايع فيهم انواع الناس كامل رجال واعليات
واج في كل الصفات مر راكبين الوتات و مر امكوطرين ، وفي اكثر
احوالهم ابوتاتهم ومسلحين و عندهم كل ال إكند يفصل فيه .

امن اعجب ارواياتهم ال كط عدل : خالك راخل مل بتيك تم اعكاب الليل
حوالي الوحده إلين جات شيباني رافد مظت طلاب الصدك و كالت ل بنها أدور
ابليد تركد فيها لان اهلها ابعيد ولا اتلات اتكد اتكيسهم ، شك ان
ارواي اعل بابها ودخلها امعاه . وهي عامي ميعاد لاصحابها إلين
إج تفتح عنهم اعكب الراجل افطن الها ، ((مل اسريگ فيه احريگ))
و اعتن اعليها وردت اعليه لخبار ، وتلفن اعلى الشرطه و حكم
الجماعة ، ولحكوها فيها لعليات والرجال وكلهم ((اصرك من إكند))
ولا إقمظ حد عين اعلى شي ما صرگوه .

Street Robbers in Nouakchott

Robbery is a bad phenomenon and there didn't use to be much in our country society. But now it has become common in Nouakchott, and particularly in recent times with the appearance of groups (called) "Enter Something." Those of the "Enter Something" (group) gather all kinds of people - men and women, and they come with all (different) characteristics - sometimes riding in cars, sometimes walking, but in most cases they (are) in their cars and armed. They have every tool they might need.

Among their most amazing accounts--(of-what) they have done:--
 There was a man, (who was) the owner of a shop, (working) late into the night, about one o'clock, when an old woman came carrying a cloth bag of the beggar of alms. She said to him that she wanted a place to sleep because her family was far away and she couldn't go to them. He thought that (her) account was on the level and let her enter with him. She had given a set time to her friends when they (were) to come (for) her to open the door to them. Afterwards, the man was on to her (because) - "the owner of the thief has a fire in him." (So) he tied her up and she told him the whole story/plan. He telephoned the police and they arrested the whole group. They found men and women in (the group), (and each one was) "A worse robber than the allergy," or "No one closes his eye on something without them having stolen it."

Work done with Kaber ould Beye, May 31, 1994

كمكاديبرات

كل انهار عاكب انهار تتبدل الحيات في انواكشوط ويطر شي اجديد .
امن ال ل سنوات كام اطفل هون وعاد إعدل العاب زين بالدرجات و
شاع وعادت الناس كامل اتشد اخبار وتمشي تتنيمش في ذ ال إعدل .
اتلاو اولاد البطارين كاملين إحامروه وإحاول يحرك تحراك ، وخلقّت
هذ اجماع ال ينكالها كامكاديبرات .

وهذ اجماع امبوشل برواحهم وبوتاتهم ولاقاديهم شي الا ماشين كصار
كلهم يشرول اهل وت زين و سابك ويمشي بيها يتعلم تحراك كمكاديبرات و
بالنسبة الهم حد حراك إتم إعدل ((دبار آمركا)) ووف عداد
السيارة وال الدراجة و عندهم ايام يجابر فيهم اعلى حاشيت ابخر
إتم إطلع وتات ٥٠٤ اعلى الزيرات ويكتب رقم ٨ بالسيارة و رصف
امتار بالدراجة ودائما إلين يدخل في الدشر إعدل حوادث امتين
بيهم ال ماهم متكايسين و ((ال ما عس اعلى راص ما إر حد إعس
اعليه)) و ((السالم اسمين يوكل اربيع داير)) .

"Cascaders"

Each day after (much of) the day (is over), life changes in Nouakchott and something new appears. For (several) years a young man here began making up neat games (using) motorcycles. He became famous and all the people began talking (about him) and they went to see what he was doing. Manager's sons all began imitating him and tried to drive (as) he drove. And (there was) born this group we call the "Cascaders."

This group takes risks with their lives and their cars. They don't care about anything, they just (keep) going (until they) ruin (something or someone). Each one's parents buy him a nice fast car and he takes it (out) to learn to drive (like) the "Cascaders." For them, one who (really) drives does the "American start" and finishes (by attaining to the highest number on) the car or motorcycle's odometer. There are days you find them together at the oceanside climbing the dunes in 504 (peugeot) cars, writing figure eights (in the sand) with (their) cars and jumping (several) meters (off the ground) with (their) motorcycles. And always when they enter town they have bad accidents because they are not careful.

"The one who doesn't watch out for himself

will not find (that) someone watches out for him."

"The good life (let's one) eat next years' harvest."

(meaning - one who enjoys the good life will see to it he enjoys it in such a way that he can still enjoy it tomorrow)

Work done with Kaber Ould Beye, June 2, 1994

الامثال وحيات الموريتانيين القديم

(١) « اركب من شعران » والشعران حشرة تقرر اعلي كرش لحمار ويتم
يجري وإرصف ولا تفتصل امعاه .

(٢) « اهرد من عبل » عبل آلة عند المعلمين يهرد بيها لحديد و
عادت الناس إلين اتشوف حد مهرود قالو اعليه لوكيل اتكول اهرد من
عبل .

(٣) « اكرب من ليد الفمها » تنكال ال شي اكريب حت بيه ال الصب
اول شي يسهد اعليه إدير ايد افم

(٤) « آرگ من زغب » زغب لغنم وال الخيل .

(٥) « اعقل من ديلول »

ديلول راجل حكيم من اهل لولين و امن امراد ان ليل كان عند خطار
واتلاو يتعشاو ومتلات لحيت من كسكس وشافت منت وكالت ل : البل اتفركت
في الغابة كام وامسح لحيت وكال الها : « يا منت رعيانها خمس »
و المفهوم من الرواية انها هي البل عينها اعلي كسكس والغابة ازغب
الحية و هو الرعيان عان بيها اصابع الخمس .

وامن امراد كط ربا واحد إلين اكبر امشي وعاد امع اعدوه وچ هام
يكتل واوكف الهيه من و سول عن اخر شي كال ديلول : « اخرشي نكران
اجميل ».

Proverbs and the Old Life in Mauritania

1) "Rides (hangs on) better than a horse fly." The horse fly is an insect that fixes (itself) to the belly of a donkey and (the donkey) scratches and jumps but he won't leave him alone.

2) "Makes holes better than a hand drill." The hand drill is a tool (used) in the hand of a blacksmith to drill through steel. The people, when they see someone "making holes" (note: meaning that he is eating a lot), (since) food is dear to him, (normally) say to him, "(He) makes holes better than a drill."

3) "Closer than the hand is to the mouth," which is said of something that is very close because the first thing a baby does is put his hand in his mouth.

4) "Thinner than a hair," a sheep or horse's hair.

5) "Wiser than Dayloul." Dayloul was a wise man from among (our) forefathers. Among his stories: (there was) a night he had a guest and they began to eat supper. Some couscous fell unto his beard and his daughter saw it and said to him, "The camels are scattered in the forest." So he brushed his beard (with his hand) and he said to her, "My daughter, they have five shepherds." They understood by this story that she meant by camels, couscous and the forest was the hair of the beard. He meant by shepherds, the five fingers. (And in another) of his stories: he had just raised someone. When he grew up he left and took up with the enemy. He came (back) and wanted to kill him. He stood over there (away) from him and asked him what the worst thing was. Dayloul said, "The worst thing is to deny (one's) good deeds." Work done with Kaber ould Beye, June 7, 1994

حديث الشارع في انواكشوط

الناس في انواكشوط دائما الا اترد الحگ والكذب كل انهار
تسمع امراد اجداد . وكل حد عند طريقته ال إوصل بيها لخبار
وهاذ هو ال واس لمرد تختلف من واحد شور اوخر . وعلى كل حال
المثل إكول: ((شي ابلا أساس ما يوگف)) معناه ان ذ ال يرتد خالگ
من شي.

في هذ الايام الناس شاد الا اخبار راجل كان بايع امر لراجل من
السعوديه و امشي بيها ووصلها وفي الاخير اطالع اعلى قضيت و
وقف وانجابت لمر من شور السعوديه .

هاذ الشكل من لمراد ما إكد حد يعرف كذب من حگ الا كيفت:
((لكران ما كذبناها ولا صدقناها)) .

هاذ الناس ال اترد امراد الشارع الا وحدين طبيعتهم ذ امبيتها
ولا هم دايرين بيهم شي . والمثل إكول : ((يموت المرء علي ما
عاش وقيل يبعث)) .

Street Talk in Nouakchott

The people of Nouakchott always recount the truth and the lie. Each day you hear a new story. Each one who has his way of telling the new and this the reason accounts differ from one to another. In any case, a proverb says,

"Something without a foundation doesn't stand up."

This means that which is recounted has something to it.

These days the people are talking about the account of a man who sold a woman to a man from Saudi Arabia. He accompanied her and brought her to him. Afterwards, his affair was discovered, he was arrested and the woman was returned from Saudi Arabia.

(In) this kind of tale, one cannot tell the lie from the truth, just as "fortune telling, we cannot deny nor confirm it."

These people that recount the street talk, (they are) simply many for whom it is normal to practice such. They don't mean anything by it. A proverb says,

"A person dies with his deeds (what he's done)

and is said (to be) reborn accordingly."

Work done with Kaber ould Beye, June 8, 1994

1) Say this to yourself and give the
rabbit back her calf.

(١) كَوَل هالك و أعطى للنيرب عجلتها

2) What does plenty know about hunger?

(٢) اشعارف البادن للظامر

3) The head, when it becomes all eyes,
makes (one) afraid.

(٣) الرامز إلين إعود عينين يخلع

4) Each one's means obtains his end.

(٤) كل حد حالت اتلاحدك أبلأخرة

5) The one who keeps something will need it.

(٥) إل لم شي يفصل فيه

6) The one who criticizes something
puts something (better) in its place.

(٦) آل شكر شي إدير شي افبل

7) What the next hour brings is of no concern.

(٧) آل دون ساعة ما إخمم

8) The mother of a thief will not continue
to celebrate (with a yodel).

(٨) أم السارك ما تم ألا أتزغرت

9) The shade reaches the patient one.

(٩) آل امبر يلحدك الظل

10) The thorn is pointed from early on.

(١٠) الشوكة من سقرتها امحدة

11) Anyway it comes is alright.

(١١) ألا اباش جات غزات

12) If one has not seen the sky,
do not show it to him.

(١٢) آل ما شاف اسم لا اتنتعول

13) What is thrown up will come back
down to earth.

(١٣) الزرك مألها ألا اتراب

14) The one who came to teach him to
swim he (the student) drowns him.

(١٤) ألا ج لاه إعلم العوم غرك

15) (The one) with scabies can only
scratch with the palm of his hand.

(١٥) لجرب ما إحكل ماه كف

16) If it isn't (already) in your
stomach, do not try to digest it.

(١٦) آل ماه في كرشك لا تعمل أعليه

17) "Give me" doesn't let someone
like me.

(١٧) اعطيني ما اتخل ألييغني

18) What use to kill won't (even)
shame one (now).

(١٨) أَلْ كَانَ يَكْتُلُ مَا أَتَلَ إِحْشَمُ

19) A lie lets one drink but doesn't
quench one's thirst.

(١٩) الْكَذِبُ تَسْكَ يَغِيرُ مَا اتْحَوْشُ

20) The little lie will be stopped.

(٢٠) لَكْذِيبُ أَلَا يُوَكِّفُ

21) The one who is set free from age
has set himself free.

(٢١) أَلْ أَرْخَاتُ سَنَ يَرْخِيهَا

22) The one desiring respect
climbs to the top of the trees.

(٢٢) أَلْ دَايِرُ لِمَهَابٍ يَطْلُعُ بِيهَا رَوْصُ أَصْدَرُ

23) Put your head in the hay
and the donkey will eat it.

(٢٣) دِيرُ رَاكُ فِ لِحْشِيشٍ يُوَكْلُوهُ لَحْمِيرُ

24) There is no world after this
if it is not the after life.

(٢٤) الدُّنْيَا مَا عَاكَبَتْهَا مَا هَ لَا خَرُ

25) What's born dies.

(٢٥) أَلْ أَخْلَكُ مَا تَ

26) The finger without anything on it
is not licked.

(٢٦) أَصْبَعُ مَا فِيهِ شَيْءٌ مَا إِلْتَمَسَ

27) Listen to the word that makes you cry
Don't listen to the word that makes you laugh.

(٢٧) اِسْمَعْ أَكْلَامَ امْبِكِينِكَ
لَا تَسْمَعْ أَكْلَامَ امْطَحْكِينِكَ

28) Five can do what ten can't undo.

(٢٨) إِدِيرُ خَمْسُ أَلْ مَا يَكْلَعُ عَشْرُ

29) If you don't swallow something
it won't get stuck.

(٢٩) أَلْ مَا أَصْرَطُ شَيْءٌ مَا يُوْخَلُ

30) We kiss one another
but each one's lips stay with him.

(٣٠) أَلَا اتْحَابِينُ
وَكُلُّنْ أَبْكَأُولَ أَشْوَارِبُ

31) If he leaves in person
pray he will (never) return.

(٣١) أَلْ إِمَشْ بَكْدَ لَا إِرْدُ

32) Don't fix what you didn't break.

(٣٢) مَا تَصْلُحُ أَلْ مَا اتْخَصَرُ

33) Obligation makes it a good deed.

(٣٣) الْفَارْظُ وَاسِيهَا خُصَلُ

34) The one without credit (gains) no interest.

(٣٤) أَلْ أَبْلَا دِينَ بَلَا رِزْقُ

35) When one takes a debt he nods

(٣٥) الدِّينُ سَاعَتُ اكْبِيْظُ هَزْ لَكْفُفُ

but when one pays up he bites his lip.

و ساعى اخلام عطا اشفف

36) The one who puts powder in his mouth
knows how to wet it.

(٢٦) آل دار ادكك آفم
يعرف آباش ابل

37) Only beware for your mother
you last one.

(٢٧) آلا ويل أمك يا الوران

38) If you've reached one eyed people
partially close one of your eyes.

(٢٨) آلا الحكت الناس عور
أكصر في عينك

39) What's done by one's own hand
doesn't hurt him.

(٢٩) آل بيه آيد ما توجع

40) That which increases, gets noticed.

(٤٠) آل كثر ينفظل

41) Only keep me from (being like) the one
that doesn't hesitate to expend effort
But attains nothing.

(٤١) آلا إفكن من آل ما ابخل
شي ولا آشي

42) Keep the baby camel with the
donkey and he will teach him to bray.

(٤٢) لم لحوار أمع لحمار إعلم اشهيك
وال انهيك

43) The one who has been bitten by a snake
is afraid of a rope.

(٤٣) آل عطى لحنش خلعال لجل

44) Don't call him stingy who gives what
(he has) in his hand.

(٤٤) آل اعطى آل فيد ما يسم بخيل

45) (Do) not (do it because) you dislike it
but (because) it is on your left (where it
is not culturally acceptable to touch it).

(٤٥) ماه كره يغير اتعسريه

46) The owner of a thief has a fire in him.
(The one who is a thief has no inner peace.)

(٤٦) مل اسريك فيه آحريك

47) The one who does not steal, the
trackers (will) not cause to fear.

(٤٧) آل ما يصرك ما تتلع الكصاص

48) The one who doesn't watch out for himself,
will not find someone to watch out for him.

(٤٨) آل ما عس أعل راص
ما إر حد إعس أعليه

49) The good life (assures one) of
eating next year's harvest.

(٤٩) السالم أسمين يوكل اربيع داير

50) (Someone) hangs on better than a horse fly.

(٥٠) اركب من شعران

- 51) (Someone) makes holes better than a drill. (٥١) أَهْرَدَ مِنْ عِبَلٍ
- 52) (Something or someone is) closer than the hand is to its mouth. (٥٢) أَكْرَبَ مِنْ لَيْدِ الْفَمِهَا
- 53) (Something or someone is) thinner than a hair. (٥٣) أَرْكَ مِنْ زَغَبٍ
- 54) (Someone is) wiser than Deilou! (a sage). (٥٤) أَعْقَلَ مِنْ دَيْلُولٍ
- 55) The opening of the eyes is the same but their vision is not the same. (٥٥) الْعَيْنُ شَكَّتْهَا وَحَدٌ وَنَظَرْتُهَا مَا هُ وَحَدٌ
- 56) The one who wants to lie distances himself from his witnesses. (٥٦) أَلْ بَاقٍ يَكْذِبُ أَبْعَدُ أَشْهُودٍ
- 57) Something without foundation will not stand. (٥٧) شَيْءٌ إِبْلَا أَسَاسٍ مَا يَوْكُفُ
- 58) Fortune telling, we cannot deny or confirm it. (٥٨) لَكِنْ زَانٍ مَا كَذَّبْنَاهَا وَ لَا صَدَّقْنَاهَا
- 59) A person dies with his deeds and is said (to be) reborn (accordingly). (٥٩) يَمُوتُ الْمَرْءُ عَلَى مَا عَاشَ وَ قِيلَ يَبْعَثُ
- 60) A sac with nothing in it won't stand up. (٦٠) أَرْكَيبُ مَا فِيهَا شَيْءٍ مَا تَوْكُفُ
- 61) The one who looses his things looses his mind. (٦١) أَلْ قَادِي لَيْلٍ قَادِي عَقْلٍ
- 62) If one bites you and you don't bite him back, he will think you have no teeth. (٦٢) أَلْ عَطْلُكَ مَا عَطَيْتَ إِشْكُوكَ إِبْلَا سَنِينَ
- 63) He who has no backbone will fall down. (٦٣) أَلْ مَا هُ أَطْهَرُ إِطِيحُ
- 64) For every young camel, it is its mother that gives the most milk (meaning - is his favorite). (٦٤) كُلُّ أَحْوَارٍ عِنْدَ أُمِّ خَنُوفٍ
- 65) By adhering to one's moral responsibility, it is not for sure one will loose it (the item in question). (٦٥) السُّتْرُ مَا هُ ضَامِنُ أَرْكَالٍ
- 66) By fulfilling our moral responsibility we also maintain our material goods. (٦٦) انْصَرْنَا وَ أَبْكَانَ لَيْنٍ

67) Do it in a group (and) it works,
(but) do it by yourself, it breaks.

(٦٧) عدلها بأجماعتك تصلح
عدلها وحدك تخسر

68) One all by himself can't master himself.

(٦٨) آل حد رامر يقلب

69) When you've eaten supper, go (for a
walk) even if its (only for) a couple of steps."

(٦٩) إذا تعش تمش و لو بقدمين

70) To get to know each other,
(you) only (need) one time (together).

(٧٠) المعرفة ألا من وقت واحد

71) Among Maures, there are no conflicts.

(٧١) الناس بيطان والديك ماه
خالك

72) The one who hears only with his ears,
he (God) gives him deafness.

(٧٢) آل يسمع ألا ابوذنيه يعطيه
اطرش

73) The one who is hiding behind the days
will be exposed.

(٧٣) آل مدرگ بليام عريان

74) The one who recommends you (do good)
to your mother, belittles you.

(٧٤) آل وصاك أعل أمك حكرك

75) A hot (idea) in the head,
spreads (fast) among the people.

(٧٥) آل آمرگ في الرامر ابلغ في الناس

76) "Grab, grab" only increases one's grip.

(٧٦) اكرد اكرد ألا اتزيد أحكيم

77) Even if the complaint isn't
effective, it leaves a bad taste
(in one's mouth)."

(٧٧) الكرظ إلى ما حاكت اتشين لخلاك

78) If someone gives you advice,
observe his corral.

(٧٨) آل اتريالك خرمر ركبت امراح

79) First of all, one begins with himself.

(٧٩) أول ما إسبگ المجنب رامر

80) A tree doesn't realize its leaning.

(٨٠) الصدر ما تغطن الميلتها

81) (Practicing) generosity exclusively
leads to mooching (off someone else).

(٨١) ألا الكرم آل عاگبت امكاظ

82) What's not sinful (religiously
forbidden) is a minimal evil.

(٨٢) آل ماه احرام شينت الكليل

83) One who teaches adults tires himself.

(٨٣) ساداب الكارج ذارج

84) The tongue reads but the heart is stone.

٨٤) اللسان يقرأ و القلب حجر

85) Doubt, don't pray with it.

٨٥) الشك ما يصل بيه

86) What the (religious) judge said,
its finished.

٨٦) آل كآال القاض ماضى

87) The matter, when it reaches the Lord,
its finished.

٨٧) لخبار آلين تلحك مولان
توف

88) Don't (let) the calf die
or (let) the milking bowel dry out.

٨٨) ما إموت لعجل
و لا تيبس التاديت

89) A worse thief than the allergy.

٨٩) امرك من إكند

90) If someone puts the side of his robe
out for you don't sit down on it.

٩٠) آل انشرك طرف لا تكعد اعليه

91) It (was) once and (now) its finished
said the butter fryer.

٩١) و حد وفاتت كآال شواي الزبد

92) "Go slow" he who in his thoughts
is running.

٩٢) يمشي بالشور آل في اخلاك يجرى

93) The old man sees lying down
what the young man can't see standing up.

٩٣) إشوف الشبانى آل تاكي
آل ما إشوف ألصب آل واكف

94) The tongue doesn't lead to good.

٩٤) اللسان ما إود احسان

95) Running (requires) eyes.

٩٥) الدفع آلا ابعينيه

96) Better that famine take and kill him
than it take and free him from his
moral responsibility.

٩٦) الجوع اشبه آل كبط و كتل
من آل كبط و طلس

97) The milk bowel cannot dip from
her friend (equal).

٩٧) التاديت ما تقرف من صاحبته

98) One stick (all by itself) won't light up.

٩٨) اشهاب واحد ما يكدى

99) One hand (all by itself) can't clap.

٩٩) آيد واحد ما اتمفك

100) When we sang we didn't sing off key.

١٠٠) محدنا انغن ما انزل

101) The one who is great (in age) is ashamed.

١٠١) آل اكبر احشم

102) The one who uses his tongue

١٠٢) آل بالسان ما يذهب

doesn't get lost.

103) He pushes you to do something
(though) he cannot prevent its consequences.

(١٠٣) أزينها لك آل ما ينفكك فيها

104) The one who is more affectionate than
your mother is a faker.

(١٠٤) آل أحن من الام كهان

105) The one who doesn't get angry is a donkey
and the one who refuses to forgive is a devil.

(١٠٥) آل ما ينفكع احمار
و آل ما يرفض شيطان

106) Ask the experienced one,
don't ask the doctor.

(١٠٦) سال امجرب لا اتسال اطييب

107) The worst thing is to deny one's good deeds.

(١٠٧) أحر أش نكران اجميل